

maybe it means nothing (i think about you often) by lavenderlow

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Summary:

In the wake of the blazen heat, the monsters arrive.

or

Jonathan is a warlock- and he's learned time and time again to not mess with the witch's law. Maybe one more time, though, he can be spared. There's something about that mortal with the doe eyes and smile that could stun Satan himself- and he wants it.

(may contain spoilers to Chilling Adventures of Sabrina! be warned!)

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Author's Note:

hi i finished CAOS in 3 days and ive been sucked in, but theres no ships in it that i feel strong enough about to write fanfiction about, so this was born. please enjoy.

the name of this story comes from "FABRIC" off of Brockhampton's "iridescence"

Autumn arrived in Hawkins quietly- slower than what it felt like years before- inching down the leaves like molasses and striking them to the ground with a simple gust of wind. The air got nippy and scarves were thrown carelessly around the necks of every young daughter and son on their way to school, jackets tossed recklessly over the shoulders of the firstborns to keep them warm with a protection spell and plenty of butterscotches from last season to keep them company.

The morning of September twenty-third, the second day of fall, came upon the Byers house in excited anticipation. The oldest- a month from being eighteen- Jonathan Byers shot up from his bed in the back room of the house- ears filled with the sound of his mother calling him from the kitchen. He shrugged the lining of the covers off him, stripping them down and leaving him bare in the cold, which usually would cause him to shiver and grog- but this morning was different. That excitement for the season crept through his veins and kept him motivated.

It took him less time than usual to pull on a loose sweater and a pair of sweatpants- the usual clothes he wore outside of school. He watched his every move in the mirror as he did it, too, studying himself up and down as his hands made quick work of pulling on sleeve after sleeve, leg after leg.

"Jonathan!" His mother called again, voice ringing out slightly louder than before.

“Coming!”

He shuffled out of his room, brushing a hand through his hair and pulling the bangs out of his face. The kitchen was bustling- Will, his younger brother, already sitting at the table and eating a plate of scrambled eggs and leftover *whatever*, and his mother signing papers to who knows what on the kitchen counter.

Joyce Byers, mother of two, and esteemed witch in the Church of Quiet, was no witch to be messed with- that was for sure. That’s why Jonathan couldn’t protest when his mother said *“Take your brother out to the clearing in the woods today. His dark baptism is close and I want him to know what is expected of him. Okay, sweetie?”*

He couldn’t say no to her either way- not when she spoke in that voice.

So, Jonathan was to take his brother across town into the clearing of wood behind the oldest building in Hawkins, Indiana- the church at the end of Dogwood street- where none of the mortals even *knew* the building existed. In the clearing was a stump, and on that stump was a holster, a stand for a book to hold- used only on the night where a child of the church was to come into one’s own.

The problem with walking all the way across town meant that Jonathan would have to interact with said mortals. There really aren’t many- Hawkins was built by witches and for witches, but his mother said that when the colonies started expanding westward, the town had been broken into by some threatening witch hunters that demanded to stay there. Jonathan knew that not only was it against witch law to interact with mortals for more time than needed- but every mortal in Hawkins was descendant of the people that wanted to kill him.

Jonathan was sure his brother didn’t want to do it any more than he did- after he finished his breakfast, he sulked to his room after throwing his plate in the sink. Jonathan watched as his mother closed her eyes and shook her head, going back to signing paperwork at the counter.

“Jonathan,” His mother said, making him turn around and face her.

He hummed, tilting his head to the side, staying quiet.

“The church is *wary* about Will and his dark baptism.” She muttered, dropping the red pen onto the counter and crossing her arms. “You need to inspire him to- to not *refuse* his signature. We can’t have him threatening the lineage.”

Jonathan chuckled, crossing his own arms across his chest and huffing- head ducked down to stare at his feet. “Are you worried he’s going to follow in my footsteps, mom?” His leg started to bounce- he knew that the topic of his own dark baptism was controversial in the house- even more so in the *coven*.

Joyce stuttered. “No, Jonathan, that’s not it-”

Jonathan extended a hand, shaking it in a gesture to say *don’t worry about it* . “Don’t worry, Mom. Even if he didn’t sign his name, he’d come around later. We all do.” He watched as she shook her head, looking back to the papers in front of her. What else did she want him to say? That he’d make sure he wouldn’t? Jonathan would like to think that yes, he is growing into a well-suited member of his coven, but he wasn’t controlling. He wasn’t going to force Will to do anything- much less sign his name into the Book of the Beast. He knows how stressful it can be the days before your dark baptism- all the fasting, the protection spells, the expectations- his own dark baptism seemed it would forever be a fresh memory- engraved into the front of his eyelids.

The anxiety was the worst. His mother had been pestering him for days, forcing him to drink cleansers and to say prayers before he went to bed, telling him the Dark Lord was waiting for his son to be brought unto him. He was intimidated and *terrified*, for Satan’s sake, as is every young witch and warlock. At the actual ceremony, though, was when things went downhill.

Father Brenner had said that the ceremony wasn’t a *big thing* . He was expecting his family and maybe some older members of the coven- but no one else. So, when he got there, it was reasonable that he was shaken after seeing that his enemy, Billy Hargrove, and his gang of goons were there- but also the rest of the coven.

To see him in his underwear.

His face had gone red and he hadn't known how to think- he just started shaking- then after the shaking was the stumbling, and after the stumbling was the stuttering- and after stuttering became fainting once the knife hit Jonathan's hand.

When he had come to, he was still in the clearing of the wood- his mother's hand behind his head as he laid down in front of the altar.

"He's awake, Father Brenner," She said, brushing her hand across his forehead and wiping away the bangs from his eyes. He was disoriented as hell and his heart still raced a mile a minute in his chest- but as his eyes scanned around, he knew he had to have been out for a while. The rest of the coven was gone- save for his family and the priest.

Father Brenner cleared his throat. "We'll carry on, then."

Jonathan swore that he felt an energy emit from his mother then- a sense of disbelief, shock, maybe? It felt comforting, and Jonathan could only assume that it was a sense of motherly intervention. "Give the boy some time, Father Brenner-" she said, Jonathan's head still held up by her hands, holding him in her arms. "He's just fallen before the feet of the altar. Let him get his senses. The Dark Lord can wait."

"The Dark Lord waits for no one, Joyce. Heft your son up and sign his name into the Book of the Beast, if you must." His voice was cold-stoic, as it always was- coated in fatally fresh spearmint.

A hand waved across his face then- presumably his mother's, and he felt a slight sense of relief. His heart had stopped beating so aggressively, and he felt as if he could stand again- "Mom," he muttered, shaking the hair out of his face. "Let me get up. I can sign it, for *Satan's* sake."

And with that, he heaved himself up, dropped the fountain pen into the droplet of blood he had left behind, and wrote his name in the finest cursive he could muster. *Jonathan Byers.*

That day repeated itself in his head on the hour- at this point, he's gotten used to it. It was embarrassing, no doubt, but when you live for hundreds of years, what can bother you?

So, either way, Jonathan knew how Will was feeling. He thought that *maybe* if he went into the younger Byers' room and tried to talk to him about it, but he was shunned with a slam of his door and a quiet, muffled sound of "*Go away, Jon.*"

Jonathan huffed- standing still in front of the closed door. No other option, then.

"Get out here, then. We're going to the clearing."

It took them a run-in with a mail boy and Will having a hissy fit, but they got to the clearing. *With time.*

"What if I just... *don't* sign my name? What's going to happen? The Dark Lord is gonna come eat me?" Will sighed, kicking the stump that served as an altar on the nights of dark baptisms. Jonathan stood close behind him, on the pathway, kicking dirt and rocks up from the ground.

"Mom will kill you, no doubt."

"Who's worse? Mom, or the Dark Lord?"

"Don't tell the Dark Lord, but Mom."

"Jeez. Okay."

Jonathan wasn't really lying- when their mom got angry, she got *angry*. When she caught their father cheating with another witch, she yelled at him from the top of her lungs and ran him out of the house *no magic needed*- but she did set a hundred year banishing spell around the house with a strand of his hair. Jonathan didn't ask why

she had it, but something about it made him think that she thought it would happen.

“Look, Will, I can’t stop you from doing *anything*- but if you don’t sign your name, you’re going to get kicked out of the coven. You won’t be able to see me, or Mom, or *Mike*- anybody. Pretty much everyone you’ve grown up with.”

Will sighed. “Yeah, but- Mike goes to *real* school, right? He’s not schooled by the church, like we are.”

Jonathan nodded, holding his arms across his chest. “What about it?”

“Well- he introduced me to some of his mortal friends. Dustin and Lucas. They seem pretty cool- but if I sign my name over, I won’t get to see them again!”

“And neither will Mike.” Jonathan deadpanned, wanting to get out of the woods already. After his own mishap with his dark baptism, he’s never really liked to go to the woods at all- it used to be his happy place. Now his happy place is his room, in the dark, with black coffee and a book.

Will stood silent for a moment, stuffing his hands into the pocket of his hoodie. “You’ll be there, right?” He asked, quiet.

“Where? Your baptism? Of course.”

Will nodded and looked down to his feet. “I’ll sign my name. I just don’t want to be in the woods anymore.”

Jonathan couldn’t agree more. He grabbed the messenger bag he had strewn against the trunk of a tree, leading the way through the trail out of the dense wood. Will followed closely behind him, wary of hunters or traps that could be right under their noses. The town of Hawkins, true to its roots, was heavy with hunters- his own father was one of them. Against the rules of the church, but he did it anyway. Maybe that was one of the reasons he was excommunicated- besides cheating on his wife with a mortal.

“Hey, Will,” Jonathan said, still leading the two of them through the wood. “How about we go stop by the diner off of Millhopper before

we go home? My early birthday present.”

Jonathan swore he could hear happiness in Will’s footsteps. “Sure, Jon.” He said, still following close behind. “Do I have a budget?”

Jonathan thought for a moment. “No.”

“Sweet!”

The diner wasn’t busy *at all*- there was only one other group dining in, and it was some teenage couple that looked Will’s age sharing a milkshake. Disgusting, young love. Jonathan despised it.

He turned his attention away from the couple and to his brother-then, to the host. He lead them to a booth on the opposite side of the diner, assuring them someone would see them shortly.

“Will, promise me you won’t date until you get into the Academy.”

“That’s like, two weeks away, Jon.”

“I- whatever. You’re too young to be dating, that’s the point.” He scolded, setting his bag down next to him in the seat and picking up a menu.

“Why do you care?” Will asked, holding his own menu up, covering his face. Jonathan took the opportunity to mimic all the good movies he’s ever seen- raising his hand and pulling down Will’s menu with his finger, causing Will to stare at him instead.

“You’ll get your heart broken. You’re better.”

Will shook his head, covering his face back up with the menu. Jonathan scoffed, leaning back in his seat of the booth, scanning over it himself. He wasn’t really even that hungry- he just knew that his mother would expect them to be gone longer- have some sort of *sibling bonding* at the altar that caused Will to see the light of the Dark

Lord. Jonathan knew that sometimes, mortal customs were easier, like sitting in a diner and talking. He also knew that he had no idea what he was getting Will for his birthday. So, it all worked out in the end.

“Hi.” A voice said, tearing Jonathan’s eyes away from the menu. “My name’s Steve, and I’ll be your waiter today. Can I start you off with some drinks?”

Steve. A disgustingly mortal name, when he thought about it. Not exactly paired with disgusting features, though- soft brown eyes and hair that could marvel Billy’s mullet that all the girls obsessed over- and a *sickeningly* sweet smile.

“I’ll have a Coke.” Will said, dragging Jonathan out of his head. He cursed him, silently, because he kind of wanted to *ignore* this mortal’s presence. If he tried to speak, he’d mess up, and if he didn’t speak, he’d look creepy- what was he supposed to do? Perform some made-up incantation to make him act better in public?

That’s some bullshit Nancy Wheeler would do.

“Lemonade.” Jonathan said, emotionless, staring down into his menu that laid on the table. It was silent for a moment after that, save for scribbles of pen on paper, and then *Steve* said, “I’ll be right back with those.”

“I’m too young to date, huh. You aren’t.” Will chuckled, leaning in on the table.

“Pick me like a vulture, brother, I’m not coming clean.”

Author’s Note:

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